



Traditional Irish Soda Bread

By Melissa Clark

YIELD 1 loaf, 8 to 12 servings

TIME About 1 hour

While soda bread with add-ins like currants and caraway can be delicious, it's not at all authentic. In Ireland, soda bread tends to be plainer and more restrained. Here is a classic recipe adapted from Darina Allen, an Irish television personality and the owner of the Ballymaloe Cookery School in Shanagarry. This soda bread is best eaten still steaming from the oven, slathered with good salted Irish butter that melts on contact with your slice. It's a fine accompaniment to corned beef and cabbage, should you be making that dish this St. Paddy's Day. Or make this recipe all year long. That's how they do it in Ireland.

INGREDIENTS

450 grams all-purpose flour (about 3 1/2 cups)

3 grams fine sea salt (about 1/2 teaspoon)

4 grams baking soda (about 3/4 teaspoon)

1 1/2 cups buttermilk, more as needed

PREPARATION

Step 1

Heat oven to 450 degrees. In a large bowl, sift together the flour, salt and baking soda. Make a well in the center and pour in the milk. Using your hand, mix in the flour from the sides of the bowl. The dough should be soft but not wet and sticky.

Step 2

Turn the dough out onto a well-floured work surface. Wash and dry your hands. Knead the dough lightly for a few seconds, then pat the dough into a round about 1 1/2 inches thick. Place it on a buttered baking sheet and using a sharp knife, cut a deep cross in the center of the dough reaching out all the way to the sides.

Step 3

Bake for 15 minutes, then reduce the oven temperature to 400 degrees, and continue to bake until the top is golden brown and the bottom of the bread sounds hollow when tapped, about 30 minutes longer. Serve warm.

PRIVATE NOTES

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Adapted from Darina Allen